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RESERVE COMPONENT READINESS: THE FORSCOM ROLE

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL LYLE C. DOERR
INFANTRY

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RESERVE COMPONENT READINESS: THE FORSCOM ROLE

by

Lieutenant Colonel Lyle C. Doerr
Infantry

US Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
4 January 1975

page A-

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With a recognition that the increased reliance upon the Reserve components as essential elements within the Total Force Policy demands the achievement of unprecedented readiness levels, the STEADFAST reorganization of the Army was initiated in 1973 in order to provide an organizational structure within which the single clear-cut mission of readiness could be addressed.

The STEADFAST concept as well as the organizational framework of FORSCOM and its application with respect to a typical National Guard organization have been studied and interviews conducted with individuals closely associated with several aspects of the program in order to ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of the concept in practice.

STEADFAST has experienced major success with relatively minor shortcomings and should require only fine tuning of the mechanism in order to best be able to respond to its mandate.

The concept of a citizen militia has been an integral part of the military philosophy of the nation since earliest colonial times, with organization and responsibilities changing with the social, political, and technological evolution of the Republic.

With the adoption of the Federal Militia Act of 1792, the first attempt to establish a system for a continuing military census of obligated manpower was initiated, and although its primary accomplishment was the creation of a uniform standard for ages of military obligation and procedure for enrollment of able bodied men between the ages of 18 and 44, this act prevailed without major revision until 1903.

The first movement toward a Federal role in support of the Reserve components or Organized Militia as it was still being called, came with the passage of the Dick Bill of 1903 which provided that the organization, armament, and discipline of the Organized Militia shall be the same as that of the Regular and Volunteer Armies of the United States,¹ and further provided Federal recognition of National Guard armory construction and training. For the first time also, provision was made for Federal pay and subsistence for National Guard personnel when on joint maneuvers with the Regular Army.

In succeeding years the Hay Bill of 1914 defined the land forces of the United States as the Regular Army, the Organized Land Militia while in the Federal service, and such volunteer forces as the Congress might authorize, while the National Defense Act of 1920 provided that the National Guard was to be a part of the

Army of the United States when in Federal service and established three peacetime components; the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the Organized Reserve; the latter being the forerunner of the present U S Army Reserve. For the first time, this legislation provided authorization for payment to individuals conducting training in any of the recognized reserve components.

These then were the primary statutes relating to reserve or civilian militia service which remained with but minor changes through the mobilization of 1940-41, and provided limited assistance to these activities on the basis of the then current definition of their role.

Following World War II, the Armed Forces Reserve Act of 1952 codified previous statutes relating to militia or reserve service and established the seven current Reserve components as follows:

- (1) The Army National Guard of the U. S. (2) The U. S. Army Reserve
- (3) The Naval Reserve (4) The Marine Corps Reserve (5) The Air National Guard of the United States (6) The Air Force Reserve and
- (7) The Coast Guard Reserve.²

The Reserve components until recent years have been considered as primarily a back-up force which could be mobilized, receive additional equipment and training, and then be employed to augment the Active forces in time of war or national emergency. The changing nature of the world wide threat together with increasing fiscal pressures, made it apparent that this system could no longer adequately satisfy the needs of the nation, and the Total Force

Policy was thus devised. This policy changed the concept and role of Reserve components from one of providing depth to the Active forces to one of sharing of missions and responsibilities between the Active and Reserve component units.

This change in the role and mission of the Reserve components carried with it an unprecedented reliance upon them in terms of mobilization and deployment requirements and a corresponding demand for the attainment of readiness levels heretofore considered unattainable by any but Active force units, and it became apparent at this point that the existing framework and methods of Federal support to the Reserve components was inadequate to support the new concept.

As a result of the findings and recommendations contained in a study prepared during 1972 by a board under the supervision of Major General James G. Kalergis, a major reorganization of the Army was initiated in 1973 under the concept designation STEADFAST, and which had as its goal the more efficient utilization of available economic and military resources through adoption of organizational, training, and management techniques and methods best able to insure success within the context of current military policy and national priorities.

Under STEADFAST, the CONUS Army areas were reduced from six to three, the former CONARC structure was eliminated, and two new commands known as TRADOC (Training and Development Command) and FORSCOM (Forces Command) were created while the AMC (Army Material Command) was retained but reorganized.

Basic assumptions of STEADFAST with respect to Reserve components envisioned the continued existence of the US Army Reserve and Army National Guard as separate entities, no more than minor changes in the Reserve component troop basis in the foreseeable future, the enactment of legislation designed to enhance personnel acquisition and retention, continued issuance of modern equipment to the Reserve components in significant amounts, and that the availability of active Army personnel and funds required to support the concept would be made available.

Additionally, the STEADFAST plan identified the lack of understanding and appreciation of the differences between the USAR and the ARNG and between the Reserve components and the active Army by the majority of active Army personnel as an inhibiting factor in the achievement of meaningful assistance, and recognized further that the most productive assistance which could be provided by the active Army would be in the area of training.

As proposed, the STEADFAST concept would demonstrate the following advantages over the previous system: (1) provide the resources, both in numbers of personnel and scope of expertise, to meet the needs for active Army support to Reserve component units. (2) replace an advisory system which was not effective in meeting present day Reserve component readiness requirements and had been a source of unit and advisor dissatisfaction. (3) provide a basis for valid evaluation of the unit readiness. (4) provide a base system to solve Reserve component readiness problems. (5) provide

for the assignment of a wider range of officer and enlisted grades and talents to active Army activities dedicated to the support of Reserve components training and readiness. (6) improve utilization of personnel assigned to Reserve component duty. (7) provide for the centralization of active Army personnel assigned to Reserve component duty at or near active installations which would enhance the desirability of this duty. (8) establish responsibility for active Army support to the Reserve components.³

The management system created in the implementation of STEADFAST maintained intact the existing personnel and logistical management systems within the Reserve components while initiating major changes in the advisor structure, the training management system, and the command lines in the USAR.

Nine Army Readiness Regions (ARR) were established within CONUS with the mission to assist Reserve component commands in the identification of training requirements, determination of the most effective resource to fulfil the requirements, and to provide assistance to the USAR and ARNG units through the use of specialized training teams. Subordinate activities of the ARR include the advisor function at brigade or group level and above, as well as the establishment of Readiness Groups (RG) composed of a number of branch and functional teams which are to be responsive to the needs of Reserve component units in the ARR area of responsibility.

A realization of the important function performed at active

Army Class I and II installations in support of Reserve component annual training (AT) and inactive duty training (IDT) led to the establishment of a dedicated staff element at each such installation to devote full time to Reserve component activities hereby providing more effective and coordinated support and assistance to Reserve component units conducting on-post training.

Within the FORSCOM structure the existing USAR Manuever Area Commands (MAC) have been retained and one additional BCT brigade in each of the seven USAR training divisions has been converted to a MAC element designed to assist in the preparation and conduct of company and battalion level CPX, FTXs and ATTs in order to provide each ARR with a dedicated MAC capability. The two original MACs, in addition to providing support to their respective ARRs are to be available to provide required higher level MAC support throughout CONUS.

We have thus seen the creation of a new structure with a specific mission and policies directed toward the achievement of Reserve component readiness at a level which can be totally responsive to the demand of a military strategy which places unprecedented reliance upon these Reserve components.

The mission of FORSCOM can easily be defined by the single word "readiness" and in pursuit of the goal of maximum readiness, its mandate is to manage unit training and readiness for combat of all deployable combat, combat support and combat service support forces of the Army, U.S. Army Reserve, and Army National Guard.

The CONUS armies, as major extensions of FORSCOM Headquarters

are to concentrate primarily on the Reserve components, through command and training responsibility for the U S Army Reserve and training supervision of the Army National Guard, and are organized to utilize Army Readiness Regions (ARR) and Readiness Groups (RG) to pursue the readiness assistance mission while the normal command and administrative functions are retained separately under the CONUSA headquarters. A unique aspect of the ARR/RG concept is its separation from these command and administrative functions and the fact that ARR organization itself does not contain many of the staff and support elements characteristic of a typical Army organization, thus permitting a more direct and concentrated effort toward the assistance mission. As an example, the ARR does not normally participate in planning or execution of area responsibilities of the CONUSA so that in the event of natural disaster or emergency, channels would be between CONUSA HQ, designated supporting installations and involved Reserve component units and not through the ARR or RG. Likewise, the command channels to USAR organizations are direct from CONUSA and do not include the ARR.

A graphic representation of the command and assistance relationship within the CONUSA are shown in figure 1.

In order to provide a maximum of technical assistance in the greatest number of functional fields, the nine ARR's and 28 RG's have been established throughout the three CONUSA areas, with each organization providing assistance to RG units within its geographic area of responsibility.

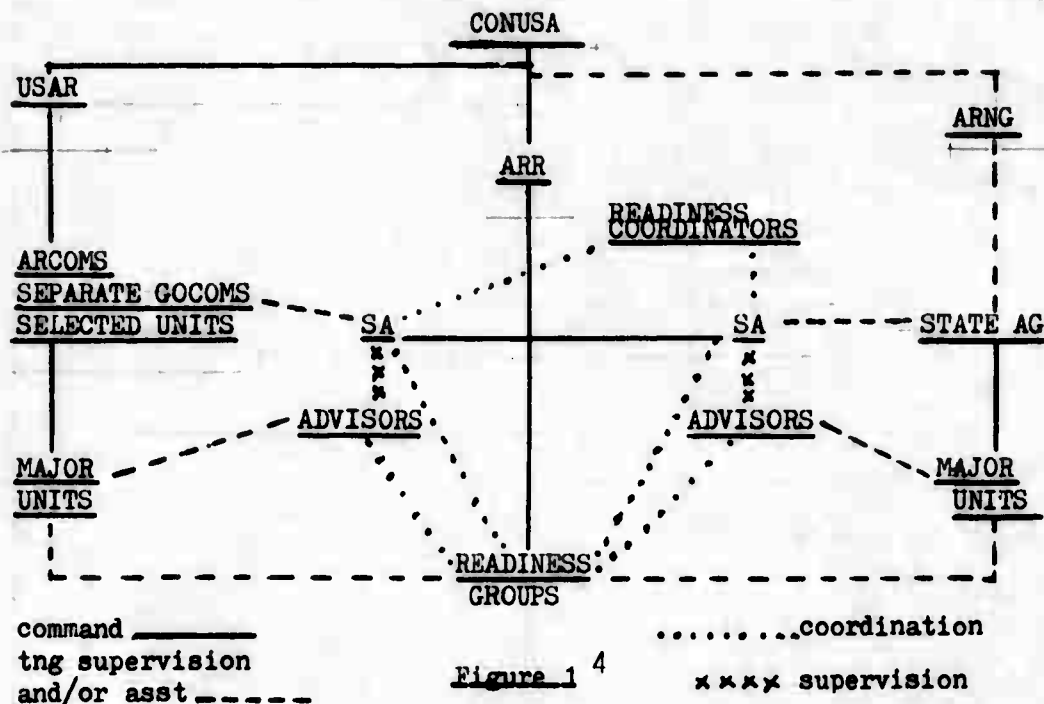


Figure 1 4

The assistance and advisory functions of the ARR are organized in three echelons, with the first of these including the advisors assigned to major elements such as State Adjutants General, Army Reserve Commands, divisions, brigades, Maneuver Area Commands, and Maneuver Training Commands as well as certain high priority units. The second echelon includes the Readiness Group with its mobile teams of branch specialists who provide training and logistics assistance to units within the geographic area served by the group. It is at this echelon that the most direct contact between the assistance effort and the assisted unit are effected and where the success or failure of the concept will in large measure be determined.

The third echelon of the advisory/assistance function is that of the Readiness Coordinators who perform staff supervision of the ARR with a primary mission of coordinating assistance efforts

throughout the region in order to ensure that assistance efforts planned by the RG or advisor are properly concentrated on the most critical of the readiness problems. Mutual support programs involving more than one component are arranged by the Readiness Coordinator as are the establishment and maintenance of affiliation agreements. As a matter of policy and practice coordination of readiness assistance is accomplished at the lowest possible level.

Major responsibilities of the ARR include assisting the Reserve components in the attainment and maintenance of unit readiness, supervision and coordination of USAR and ARNG training to include facilities, programs, transportation, and overall training assistance. Review of Reserve component contingency and mobilization planning, organization and implementation of Maintenance Assistance and Instruction Team (MAIT) programs, command of assigned advisors and RG elements, and performance of liaison and staff visit functions with major Reserve component commands are also included as a function of the ARR. The ARR mission is achieved through the Readiness Coordinators, advisors, Readiness Groups, and other available resources available from both the Active Army and Reserve components.

In the case of divided or widely scattered units, the ARR in which the division or major headquarters is located has the responsibility for coordination with the ARR in which the subordinate units are located in order to determine overall readiness of the division or command, and training assistance efforts.

Readiness Group elements include, in addition to command and administrative personnel, branch and special purpose teams as well as MAIT and administrative teams which are scheduled by the RG to assist USAR and ARNG units in the area in achieving and sustaining prescribed readiness objectives. They will additionally assist in the definition of readiness requirements as well as in determining and obtaining of resources adequate to achieve the readiness requirements of the assisted unit.

Among the tasks and functions of the RG are such activities as assistance in identifying and achieving appropriate training objectives within the USAR and ARNG units, providing continual monitoring and evaluation of unit readiness status, assisting Reserve component commanders in securing adequate training facilities and equipment, and providing timely and appropriate response to specific needs of the assisted units.

Under STEADFAST, the role of the advisor has changed somewhat in scope and rather substantially in employment, with the senior advisors now being subordinate elements of the ARR, and while retaining responsibility for supervision of advisors at subordinate levels, they also enter the ARR/RG channels to effect coordination with Readiness Coordinators and RG elements in order to insure effective response to the readiness requirements of supported units and in the identification of most effective means and resources by which the readiness mission might be achieved. The advisor element will also assist the ARR commander and Readiness Coordinator in evaluating readiness within advised units through

monitoring of readiness reports and will assist units in attaining satisfactory unit readiness. The organizational structure of the ARR and RG are as depicted by figure 2.

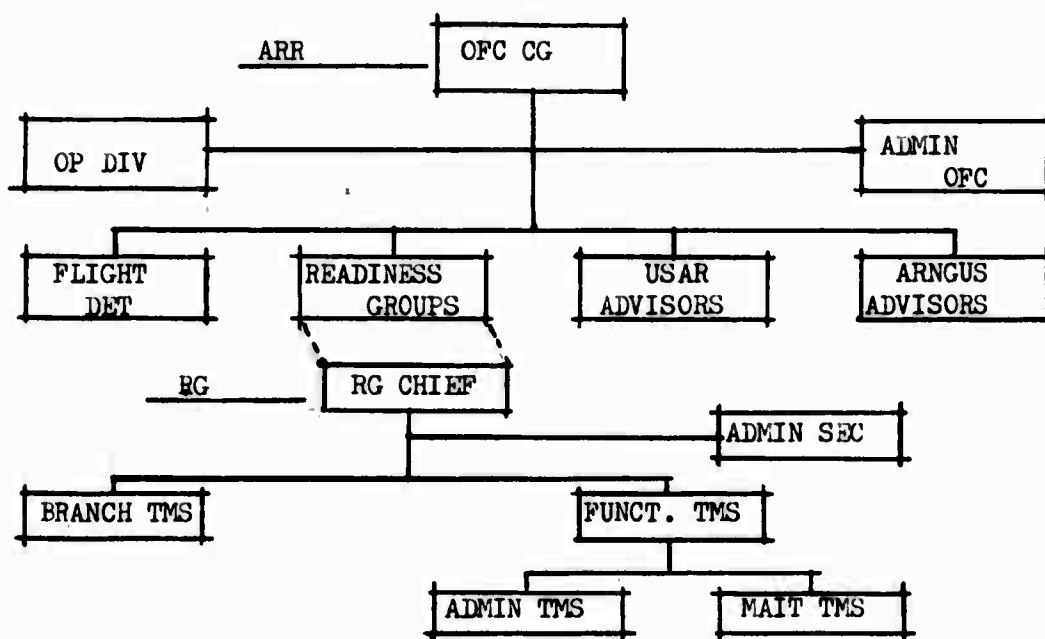


Figure 2 ⁵

Early concern was expressed with respect to the geographic distribution of the ARR/RG elements and the problems which might be encountered in attempting to provide responsive assistance to the many scattered reserve component units within their areas of responsibility, and in a number of instances this situation presented some degree of difficulty, most generally attributable to either coordination, personnel assignments, or fiscal constraints as applied to travel funds. Once a level of mutual understanding and cooperation has been achieved between the support and supported elements however, the performance record of the ARR/RG has been

exceptionally good.

A rather significant weakness does exist however with respect to personnel assignments, particularly at the level of Readiness Coordinator and also within the RG. In the case of the Readiness Coordinator function, numerous assignments at the O-6 level have been made to these positions which were not totally successful because the incumbent's recent past duties were remote from the troop unit level and his abilities to coordinate at this level were thus substantially impaired. This problem has been recognized at least in some of the ARRs and attempts are being made to remedy this to the maximum extent possible.

Also apparent at the RG echelon is the degradation of assistance support effort which results from relatively short term assignment of key personnel to the RG, or less frequently the assignment of personnel who may not be the best qualified to serve in the position. This problem, as well as that of securing adequate funding to support a rather extensive travel budget within each ARR/RG is significant to the overall success of the program and must be recognized as such by those levels of command having decision authority in these matters if the full potential of the STEADFAST concept is to be realized.

Although there have been many examples indicating the achievement of exceptional cooperation and accomplishment through the assistance effort, this is not as yet a universal experience for a number of significant reasons, among which are differences in personality and philosophy among commanders, both within the

ARR/RG elements as well as the Reserve components and a lack of total understanding by each of the others mission and organization. This same set of circumstances has resulted in a less than uniform and realistic assessment and evaluation effort with respect to establishing readiness capabilities from one region to the next.

Perhaps one of the most difficult aspects of the FORSCOM role for many commanders to fully comprehend is the unique assistance mission of the ARR/RG element which is separated from normal command functions, with the result that in many cases there has been reluctance or even opposition to the utilization of the assets available. This has been compounded at times by the assignment of personnel to ARR/RG functions who have an inadequate background in Reserve component organization and mission, and are thus apt to be less than successful in the early periods of their tour.

Additionally, while the delineation of responsibility for training and training assistance appear somewhat complicated at first glance, the lines are quite simply drawn, and if the assistance role of the FORSCOM elements is kept in mind, the methods are quite easily understood. In effect, the training responsibility remains as always with the unit or organization commander, with training assistance responsibilities shared among the assistance/advisory elements previously discussed. Inasmuch as the ARR/RG habitually coordinate assistance utilizing both Reserve component as well as Active Army and installation assets, their role remains as a coordinating and assistance effort in the case of Reserve

component units affiliated with Active Army units.

During its brief history, many questions have been raised as to both general and specific aspects of the FORSCOM role under STEADFAST, and most have been resolved or at least defined in terms which would permit detailed evaluation and subsequent action to modify or clarify problem areas.

Within the basic framework, some questions have been posed regarding the role and responsibility of the three CONUS Armies, however a comparison of the dual responsibility of the CONUSA in terms of command and administration and the single purpose assistance mission of the ARR's serves to demonstrate the value and function of each. To eliminate one or the other would necessitate the substantial expansion of the survivor and the subsequent loss of one of the major advantages of the current organizational structure which is the single mission, readiness oriented, ARR. Although the personality of the CONUSA commander may result in greater or lesser influence over the activities of the ARR's, the concept itself is unquestionably the most effective utilization of resources and concentration of effort which could be utilized to achieve current policy goals.

Somewhat the same rationale can be applied in comparing the FORSCOM organization to the previous corps organization which was both a tactical headquarters and an overall administrative, logistical, and operational headquarters, and not ideally suited to the pursuit of an exclusive readiness or assistance function.

Viewing the FORSCOM role with respect to Reserve component readiness from the vantage point of a typical National Guard Division, several observations, as to accomplishments to date as well as conclusions as to the effectiveness of the current structure can be provided.

While recognizing the differences which exist within various CONUS Armies as well as the ARR's, RG's and Reserve component units themselves, the observations developed are considered valid in that they look to the basic structures and employment of the FORSCOM elements in their readiness assistance role.

Initial results after activation of the program were rather less than satisfactory due primarily to general lack of understanding on the part of the Reserve component personnel as to the capabilities and potential of the ARR/RG as well as a similar lack of basic knowledge regarding the Reserve components which was evident among the Active Army RG personnel. Subsequently however, due to a combination of factors such as the determination and effective leadership of the ARR commander and the cooperative efforts of the RG and unit personnel, the early problems were worked out effectively, and the program gained in strength and effectiveness accordingly.

One important aspect, which required early action was the definition of the role of the RG teams in the training mission, and after a series of relatively unsuccessful experiences it was determined that training assistance supplied by the RG should be directed toward aiding in the training of the unit

personnel responsible for training rather than merely substituting RG assets to perform unit training missions. This relatively simple determination served to set the pattern for an ever-increasing cooperative action which has lead ultimately to an outstanding functioning of the system, perhaps nearly the ideal system as envisioned by the framers of STEADFAST.

One of the more interesting steps toward a full realization of the Total Force concept was taken when, as a result of the spirit of mutual cooperation and assistance which had been developed at an early stage, a special course of instruction in winter operations was presented for the Active Army members of the RG by instructors from the supported National Guard organizations, with outstanding success.

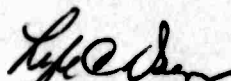
The present status of the STEADFAST organization can be most accurately described as being strong, viable, and effective in the pursuit of its readiness goal, somewhat imperfect in application and uniformity of performance because of understandable differences in command philosophy and emphasis within the FORSCOM structure, but effective nevertheless, and continuing to grow in strength and maturity.

Changes or modifications which might serve to strengthen the program should not be so much in the basic framework as in the policies and techniques of application, beginning with an aggressive participation at FORSCOM level in the development of personnel qualification and selection methods utilized in assignment to ARR/RG duty and ensure duty tours of sufficient duration to provide

the most effective employment of resources, particularly at RG levels. In addition, the role of the Readiness Coordinator is such as to demand professional qualification, regardless of grade, which will provide the best possible capability to recognize and evaluate troop level requirements and resource allocation and coordination of efforts.

With respect to the advisor echelon of the program, the newly developed format and employment of the advisor within the STEADFAST organization has served to substantially improve the overall effectiveness of this position and its contribution to the program. In this regard however, the decision to remove the advisor from units below the level of brigade or comparable organization should be re-examined and serious consideration given to locating advisors at each level beginning at least at battallion size organizations. The geographic distribution of Reserve component units and the advantages of maintaining the advisor/RG link at this level on a routine day-to-day basis would significantly enhance the function of the RG in the achievement of readiness goals throughout the force structure.

The mechanism is indeed in excellent condition, with a demonstrated capability to respond to the varied demands of the readiness mission, requiring only minor adjustment and fine-tuning in order to continue to improve its effectiveness and ability to meet the demands imposed by the readiness mission.


Kyle C. Doerr
LTC IN

FOOTNOTES

1. Jim Dan Hill, The Minute Man in Peace and War, p. 187
2. Hill, p. 508, 509
3. Army FORSCOM, Steadfast Planning Directive, p. II - 14.
4. Army FORSCOM/TRADOC Regulation 10-1, p. 15.
5. Ibid., p. 22.

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